

**High-Level Officials Meeting
14. – 15. December 2021**

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF ICELAND

(check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman, High Commissioner, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and Switzerland for hosting this first High-Level Officials Meeting.

We are at a critical juncture. Two years have passed since world leaders stood in solidarity at the Global Refugee Forum and announced ambitious pledges in support of refugees and host communities. And, in two years, they will reconvene.

The global pandemic surely derailed initiatives and at times caused severe disruptions. However, giving up is not an option. Refugees continue to show resilience and host countries continue to show hospitality. Thus, donors must continue to shoulder responsibility.

In the case of Iceland, the High-Level Officials Meeting presents an important stock-taking opportunity. We have completed a number of pledges and gradually added new ones since December 2019, including two in Uganda focusing on refugees and host communities in the field of WASH and gender equality.

Our resettlement programme, one of our key responsibility and burden-sharing commitments, is gaining momentum again, after being hampered by COVID-19 restrictions and challenges.

Guided by resolve and dedication, we will strive to honour our 2020 and 2021 resettlement commitments announced at the GRF in the coming twelve months. Substantive progress was made in the latter half of this year and we are nearing our 2020 target.

In parallel, we will continue to explore new partnerships and innovative ways to bring us closer to the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees. And in so doing, we will make every effort to focus on age, gender and diversity, in line with our domestic and foreign policy.

I thank you.